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Turner's Job Will be Hard

Now that Adm. Stansfield Turner, director of the CIA, has been designated to coordinate the activities of all federal intelligence gathering agencies — including those in Cabinet level departments — one can't help noting that it was Turner himself who has lately been telling some of the CIA's more embarrassing secrets, including the fact that prostitutes were used in human behavior studies that also involved a number of prestigious health care and academic institutions.

But don't worry about his being just a blabbermouth. The admiral has probably merely been practicing the kind of controlled candor government officials, other politicians and public relations people sometimes must — tell 'em what you've got to and make it sound sincere and maybe nobody will notice you didn't tell the whole story.

Also he may be using a little psychology in titillating us with revelations about "Operation Midnight Climax" and "safe houses" equipped like bordellos. It is well known that by hollering "Sex!" you not only can get everybody's attention but also distract their thoughts from whatever it was they were going to ask about next. Thus some of the CIA's darker and deeper secrets may be safe from discovery for a while longer. And may Heaven help us if they concern CIA activities even more alarming than some we've heard about in the last couple of years!

Well, Turner is taking over an unenviable job. Maybe he can even weed out some of the raunchier hanky-panky that we're beginning to suspect goes on routinely in the intelligence community.